

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—PROPER 23

October 11, 2020 – 9:30 a.m.

PRELUDE “Chief of Sinners Though I Be” *LSB* 611

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

People: who made heaven and earth.

Pastor: If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

People: But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

Pastor: Since we are gathered to hear God’s Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

People: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Almighty God, You invite us to trust in You for our salvation. Deal with us not in the severity of Your judgment but by the greatness of Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

FIRST READING *Isaiah 25:6–9*

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *Philippians 4:4–13*

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no

opportunity. Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 22:1–14*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-second chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

Again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.’ But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

SERMON “Welcome to the Wedding”

I. Wedding Planning

- What is the average cost of a wedding in the United States?

II. The Guest List (v.1-10)

- What is the initial response of the people?
- What are the two responses to the King’s second attempt?
 - 1.) Some paid _____ attention.
 - *Amaleo* means “to neglect, be unconcerned, disregard,” and is used in some contexts for spurning salvation.
 - 2.) Some _____ the messengers.
- Who does the King invite next?

III. The Wedding Attire (v.11-14)

- What is the issue with the man's garment?

IV. The Kingdom Today (Application)

- How do we know that all are invited?
- What are the three responses that we see today?

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen. Weddings can be fun and joyous occasions, but they can also be expensive ones, as well. According to recent studies, the average cost of a wedding is around \$33,000! When the average salary in the United States is about \$55,000, that means that a wedding is roughly 2/3 of a year's salary! No wonder people try to cut costs and corners for them when they can, and they do.

At some point in the wedding plan process, all couples probably have this conversation, "Do we need to invite them? I can't tell you the last time that we spoke, or the last time I had seen them." "Well, we do honey. We are inviting their brother!" "Okay, good point. Put them on the list." Couples might check out the packages and prices for things like DJs, photographers, caterers, and wonder if maybe an hour less, or a different day, might make a noticeable difference. They might even try to make things themselves, whether it is the invitations or party favors. When planning and hosting a wedding, it is not uncommon to search for ways to reduce costs. The King in Jesus' parable is different. He is a generous man, and spares no cost and expense for his son's wedding and the wedding feast. He invites many guests to the party of the century, but how will they respond? Who will come? Let's find out.

Jesus begins His parable about the Kingdom of Heaven by saying that the feast is ready. The King sends out messengers to tell those who are invited that everything is ready. It is similar to today in how engaged couples send out their "Save-the-date" cards so people don't forget. The King wants the people to know that the Wedding Hall is ready, the table set, dinner cooked, wine uncorked, bride ready, and groom excited. The only thing missing at this point is them!

The people's response? "No, thank-you. I don't want to go, and I'm not!" The response is puzzling, and even troubling. They would miss this feast and wedding? They would turn down the King's invite and refuse His servants? What else could they be doing that would warrant missing this? What could be better or more important? The servants return back to the King to bring him the news, and he sends different servants out.

Maybe that will do the trick. Maybe they will listen to these ones, or will change their mind. Maybe after thinking about it, they will realize they want to go. The King sends the new servants out, telling them to say, "**See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.**" In other words, "Maybe you didn't understand. Everything is ready. The feast is prepared, and it will be a good one. The finest calves have been prepared, and there will be rich food and well-aged wine. What are you waiting? Come!"

And what is the response to this? Some "**paid no attention....**" The word used here is *amaleo*, which means "to neglect, be unconcerned, disregard." It is a word used elsewhere for people spurning salvation! These people could care less. They ignore the servants and go about their own business. Some go back to farming, others go back to work. These people focused on themselves and saw something else as more important than this feast.

Others, however, do the unthinkable. They seem unaware of the phrase and concept, "Don't kill the messenger boy." That is exactly what they do. They seized the King's servants, treat them shamefully, and kill them. What is wrong with them? They reject the King's gracious invite and violently oppose him.

The King's response? Well, Jesus says, He "**was angry.**" Can you blame Him? He has been nothing but generous and kind, and tried multiple times to have them join Him at His wonderful feast. But, each time, they said, "No," and then killed His servants. So, the King sends in His troops to destroy those murderers and burn their city.

The King's good graces will prevail, though. He instructs His servants, "**Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.**" He won't let their behavior ruin His feast or

keep it empty. He opens the invitation to all. He invites the high and the lowly, the rich and the poor, the important and unimportant, the healthy and sick, the celebrities and social pariahs. All are welcome to come. The servants listen, and they **“went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.”**

With the wedding hall now full, the King walks through, and looks at His guests. As He does, one catches His eye, but for the wrong reason. He is improperly dressed for the occasion. We know what that can be like. Have you ever shown up to a gathering only to realize that you were underdressed? Maybe you thought it was going to be an informal gathering, only to realize that most people were wearing suits or fancy dresses. Did the man without the wedding garment just not get the memo? Did he simply not know how to dress? Was his dress out of ignorance? Not at all. It was his choice.

It was common in those days for the host to provide the wedding attire for guests. Since people were plucked from the streets, they needed the proper attire. They needed a wedding garment, and had been given one. This man refused to wear it. He accepts the invite on his terms. His dress offends the King, and He says, **“Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”** Jesus then ends it by saying, **“For many are called, but few are chosen.”** Many were called and invited, but not all came. That is the same today.

Jesus says that this parable shows the Kingdom of Heaven. It shows what it is like *today*. God is the King who invites everyone to the marriage feast of His Son, Jesus Christ. All are invited, and sincerely are. John 3:16 says, **“For God so loved the world....”** Who is included in that? You! Me! Everyone! No one is left out! God so loved the world that He sent His one and only son, that *whoever* believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life. God invites everyone! The Gospel and its promises are for *all*. The response?

Like in the parable, some pay no attention to God’s Word and His Kingdom. They ignore God’s invite, and refuse it! They neglect it, and could care less. They consider the things of this world more important, whether it is a career, making a living, Sunday sports, or simply, being too busy. They ignore Him, and will sadly be on the outside looking in at that final day.

Others, though, want Jesus on their own terms, like the man without a wedding garment. They want to clothe themselves in their own deeds and works before God, and try to enter Heaven on their own. They might say, “I’m a good person. I went to church. I pray. I don’t steal. I don’t cheat on my spouse. I have never murdered anyone. I’m pretty good.” But these people will be left speechless when asked why they didn’t clothe themselves in the righteousness that God offers in Jesus.

Others, though, come. They come to the party and are clothed by the host. Every sinner who receives this invitation in faith, confesses together with Martin Luther these words: “I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him, but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel....” God calls us by His Word. Salvation is all His work and doing. He first invites us in Baptism, where we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. All our sin is covered and forgiven. All our focusing on the things of this world, all our disobedience, all our choosing the ways of this world rather than the Kingdom of God; it is all paid for, covered up by the robe of Christ’s righteousness given to us here. God graciously repeats this invitation to the Heavenly feast in Communion, and by His Word. God has prepared everything we need, including the proper attire. In Christ, your spot at the wedding feast is saved and secure. The robe is ready and is a perfect fit. God says, “Come, I have everything ready.” In Christ, He does for you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

MUSIC DURING PREPARATION “The Word Is So Near”

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen

from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

**People: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;
Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your righteous judgment You condemned the sin of Adam and Eve, who ate the forbidden fruit, and You justly barred them and all their children from the tree of life. Yet, in Your great mercy, You promised salvation by a second Adam, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and made His cross a life-giving tree for all who trust in Him.

We give You thanks for the redemption You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully eat and drink of the fruits of His cross and receive the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation that come to us in His body and blood.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER

People: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

You are invited to receive the Lord's Supper if you believe and confess that Jesus Christ is your Savior from sin, you are a baptized child of the Triune God, and you believe that He gives you His body and blood in the bread and wine you receive. White grape juice can be found in the center of each tray for those who cannot receive alcohol. Children are welcome to come forward for a blessing.

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICAMUS

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

People: Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE "What Wondrous Love Is This" LSB 543

- 1 What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this
That caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul!
- 2 When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
When I was sinking down, sinking down,
When I was sinking down
Beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul.
- 3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb,
Who is the great I AM,
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,
While millions join the theme, I will sing.

- 4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on.
And when from death I'm free,
I'll sing His love for me,
And through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
And through eternity I'll sing on.

Acknowledgments

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

GENEROSITY THOUGHTS: Matt. 22:5 – “But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business.” The invitation to join God in His feast and in His work is easily ignored. The rest of life seems so much more pressing, and we always think there will be another time when we can catch back up with God. But what joys are we missing when we set aside God's invitation to join Him in His plans and purposes? What inheritance are we trading for the world's bowl of pottage?

YOUR HELP is needed again this year for the Mission's annual Thanksgiving food distribution. The past few years the Social Ministries Committee has been able to collect food and create meal bags for the Union Gospel Mission. For over 60 years, Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities has provided thousands of meals during Thanksgiving to our community, while offering volunteer opportunities and building connection with local churches. Due to the realities of COVID-19 and the impact it has on how they serve the community, we know that the need for their services and access to meals will be more vital than ever this Thanksgiving season. To maintain safety for our community members, their volunteers, and staff, they are changing the format of our Thanksgiving Food Drive this year, while still serving our community with compassion and hospitality. Union Gospel Mission is accepting financial donations only. Due to COVID-19 and its spread, we are asking individuals to donate money only to our Thanksgiving Food Bag event. They will purchase Thanksgiving food items in bulk, stretching your dollars even further. A donation of \$25 will purchase everything for a complete Thanksgiving Meal, however, any amount is welcome. Please use the following link to donate if you are able: <https://app.mobilecause.com/vf/TGBags/team/EmmausLutheranChurch> or you can donate via text: Text TGBags10 to 71777 (Msg & data rates may apply). Even though this event will look different this year, the gospel and how we live out our faith hasn't changed.

MITE BOXES: We will be having our fall LWML Mites collection on Sunday, October 25th. You can bring your box in anytime this month or if you prefer checks will be accepted also.

FROM SOCIAL MINISTRIES: Coming in November we will begin collecting new toys for the Salvation Army Toy Drive. We are looking for a Thrivent member to sponsor a Thrivent Action Grant to help with this collection. If you are interested, please e-mail Marie G. We will be doing our Hat and Mitten drive in December and would like to get a Thrivent grant for that also.

HEAR “THE LUTHERAN HOUR” on Sunday mornings at 6:05 a.m. on WCCO 830 AM radio. Next week's broadcast: “What I'm Looking For” Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. “We've all been asked to testify, to give a witness to what it is that we're looking for. We're always sending messages to the people watching us: this is what I value, this is what I'm looking for.” Dr. Michael Zeigler (Daniel 3)

THANK YOU TO ALL FACE MASK SEWERS! One hundred twenty-five face masks were delivered to the Lutheran World Relief warehouse last week. Thanks for your time and talents used to make the masks. Material

to sew masks will stay in the narthex at Emmaus if you are able to sew masks. Additional masks received will either go to Lutheran World Relief or a local organization that can use them. The fabric was donated by Marie G from her late mother's sewing supplies and the elastic was purchased with a Thrivent Action Grant. Thanks again!